

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (original) An apparatus for facilitating treatment of a tooth that is at least partially impacted, said apparatus comprising a wire comprising a first end, a second end, and a substantially planar body extending therebetween, said first end configured to couple to a tooth that is at least partially impacted, said second end configured to secure said apparatus relative to the tooth, such that said wire applies a substantially continuous force to the tooth.

2. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said body comprises at least one eyelet formed between said first and second ends.

3. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said body is unbraided between said first and second ends.

4. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said body is at least one of zigzagged shaped, serpentine shaped, and sinusoidal shaped.

5. (currently amended) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said first end ~~couple~~ is configured to couple to the tooth without circumscribing the tooth.

6. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said apparatus has a substantially uniform thickness between said first and second ends.

7. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said wire is fabricated from a superelastic material.

8. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said body comprises a spring extending between said first and second ends.

9. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 further comprising an orthodontic fixture configured to be secured against an external surface of the tooth, said body first end is configured to couple to said orthodontic fixture.

10. (original) An apparatus in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said wire is fabricated at least partially from a shaped memory alloy (SMA).

11. (currently amended) A method for treating a tooth that is at least partially impacted, said method comprising:

coupling a first end of a wire to an impacted tooth, the wire having a substantially planar and non-linear body extending between the first end and a second end; and

coupling the wire second end to an anchoring device such that the wire applies a substantially continuous force to the impacted tooth.

12. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling the wire second end to an anchoring device further comprises coupling the wire second end to the anchoring device such that at least one eyelet is defined between the first and second ends of the wire.

13. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling the wire second end to an anchoring device further comprises coupling the wire second end to the anchoring device such that the body remains unbraided between the first and second ends.

14. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling a first end of a wire having a substantially planar body extending between the first end and a second end to an impacted tooth further comprises coupling the first end of a wire fabricated from a superelastic material to the impacted tooth.

15. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling a first end of a wire having a substantially planar body extending between the first end and a second end to an impacted tooth further comprises coupling the first end of a wire fabricated from a super memory alloy to the impacted tooth.

16. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling the wire second end to an anchoring device further comprises coupling the wire second end to the anchoring device such that a substantially constant spring force is applied to the impacted tooth.

17. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 further comprising:

coupling an orthodontic fixture to an external surface of the impacted tooth;
and

coupling the first end of the wire to the orthodontic fixture.

18. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 11 wherein coupling the wire second end to an anchoring device further comprises coupling the wire second end to the anchoring device such that the thickness of the apparatus remains substantially uniform between the first and second ends.